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PINR, AMGT, TF, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIUM: SECOND BELGIUM DEATH FROM A/H1N1 PANDEMIC FLU

REF: A.BRUSSELS 1170, B. BRUSSELS 1055

¶1. (U) On October 1, the Government of Belgium's Interministerial Influenza Commission announced that a 44-year woman from Hainaut province (in the southern region of Wallonia) died that day following an infection from the A/H1N1 pandemic virus, and thus became the second patient in Belgium to die as a result of the virus since the

pandemic hit Belgium. The woman, who had no known risk factors to the virus, exhibited the first signs of flu symptoms on September ¶11.

Within a few days, her conditions grew worse, and she was admitted to the hospital on September 14 with signs of severe respiratory distress, and immediately was placed on an artificial respirator. The diagnosis of the H1N1 flu was confirmed by the hospital on September 16. Her clinical condition did not improve and, as noted, she died on October 1, 2009. Belgium's first H1N1-related death was that of a 34-year old woman from Antwerp who passed away on July 30, 2009 (ref B).

¶2. (U) Belgian health authorities also announced on October 1 an estimated 1873 new cases of H1N1 in Belgium, based on extrapolations of cases of 6,633 patients who had visited the approximately 180 doctors who comprise the country's H1N1 network that is the basis for the extrapolation. Authorities estimate a total of 8,597 persons have been infected since the outbreak began in Belgium at the end of April, with the two deaths linked to H1N1. The government's announcement also indicated that authorities consider that the spread of the H1N1 virus is relatively moderate and within seasonal norms, even though the number of reported cases doubled in the most recent week (week 39, from Sept 21-27) compared to week 38.

GUTMAN